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Editorial Notes

"The world is a mirror—try smiling at it!" This sage advice, founded in reason and justified by experience, might well be written over the doorway to your thoughts and hearts.

Ruskin finely remarked, "You keep the Sabbath in imitation of God's rest. Do, by all manner of means; and keep also the rest of the week in imitation of God's work."

Among the kindest words written of our new paper are those given in the last "Christian Advocate," of Nashville. That great paper is justly esteemed one of the finest that comes to our table, and one from which we gather many of the very best thoughts and suggestions. Its commendation is highly prized.

From what comes to us, from various public and private sources, the "Executive Commission" provision lately adopted by the Northern Church is not being used with any special alacrity or zeal. A spirit of indifference seems to prevail as to its practical application. This is equivalent to proof that while it was assented to by the great majority of the Presbyteries this assent was given more in the nature of acquiescence in somebody's proposition than from any sense of need.

Mr. J. McGlothlin, quoted in The Presbyterian of Philadelphia, gives some figures concerning the strength of the various denominations in New Orleans. He is entirely wrong on many of them. He gives the Roman Catholics at about half their actual number, or if the recent census of that denomination be correct, which we greatly question, at about one-third their number. He gives the Episcopalians three times their actual number as shown by their latest diocesan book, the Methodists fifty per cent more than they have, and the Presbyterians nearly twenty per cent fewer than their actual numbers. We wonder where he got his figures.

A correspondent thinks our church is a little too much given to exploiting historical events and the heroes of a former age, and thinks that the time given to memorial addresses, preparation for Calvin quadri-centennials, celebration (?) of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which was the very singular observance recommended by some a few years ago, would be better spent in enlarged attention to the vigorous preaching of the gospel of Christ to the dying men of today. It is rather hard, sometimes, not to agree with our brother. There is danger of overdoing such things.

"The Family Altar League" is seeking members. Of course its object is good. But why a league for every duty, for every commandment, for every line of service or work? Why depreciate God's way and God's organization? Why sign a special pledge or covenant for each duty or endeavor and thereby discredit one's solemn vow taken on entering the church? This taking of many vows makes all of them lighter and more easily disregarded. Of course, as with most of these leagues or organizations, there is a "magazine" to be taken by the members "at actual cost."

A few days ago we saw a great procession, with banners, hands, regalia, and streamers galore, filling the streets of the city with its thousands of marchers and spectators. It was the annual parade of the "Holy Name Society," an organization of Roman Catholics designed to cultivate obedience to the Third Commandment. But all this was on God's Holy Day. The motive and purpose of the organization are admirable, and if carried out in fullness of spirit would be of great benefit. But the great parade would have been much less of a fan-faronade had it not broken one commandment in proclaiming its loyalty to another.

About the greatest piece of folly that a preacher can be guilty of is fearing lest an earnest delivery of God's message, based upon a sincere belief in the authority and integrity of the Scriptures, will cost him his pulpit. Congregations do not turn off men for positiveness in telling the words of God, but they do forsake the ministry of those who are afraid of their own shadows, who mingle doubt with their words, who disparage the Bible, who exalt the reason above faith. Strong, vigorous preaching of Christ and him crucified attracts men. It never runs them away, and never runs a preacher out of his pulpit. Even worldlings have sense. They know what sincerity is. They know, too, what they need, even though they do not accept it when it is offered. They are not going to ask for it or take it at the hands of doubters.

Now we have it! The latest out is a "special Sunday" to be observed as "Anti-Tuberculosis Sunday"† Some of the New York and Brooklyn churches have appointed it. What next?